

I want to save Medicare so that all Americans can have good health care like the Democrats provided for 30 years since 1965.

COMPARING APPLES AND ORANGES

(Ms. PRYCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PRYCE. Mr. Speaker, let us talk about apples and oranges. The Republican Medicare plan will increase funding for each Medicare beneficiary from \$4,800 today to \$6,700 in 2002. Let us call that fact our apple. House Republicans have also promised to provide tax relief to American families. Let us call that fact our orange.

The Democrats are comparing apples and oranges. The point is these two issues have nothing to do with each other. The tax cuts from working families are more than set off by reductions in discretionary spending and program savings. Medicare would still be broke in 2002 even if we did not provide those tax cuts.

Why are the Democrats trying to confuse things? To scare the American people. They have no plan, just scare tactics. It is shameful and, as the Washington Post said, it is just plain wrong.

REPUBLICAN MEDICARE PLAN DETAILS DELAYED UNTIL COLUMBUS DAY

(Mr. DOGGETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DOGGETT. Well, the gentlewoman from Ohio [Ms. PRYCE] can call it broccoli if she wants to, but it is still a cut and the Republicans are still unwilling to level with the American people on these cuts. Now they come forward and tell us they will delay all the way to Columbus Day before they give us any details. It is incredible, but maybe it is not inconsistent. After all, Columbus set out on a voyage not knowing where he was going. He did not know where he was when he got there, and he did it all with somebody else's money.

Our Republican friends are a little like that, using money for seniors to pay for a tax break cruise for the rich. As they dismantle Medicare to fund their tax breaks for the rich, there is one thing that is not similar, they have not discovered middle America. They have abandoned it. With the havoc they are wreaking with Medicare, maybe they should wait from Columbus Day to Halloween or perhaps, better yet, how about April Fool's Day?

VOTE FOR MEDICARE REFORM

(Mr. TIAHRT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, Medicare is a 1965 Blue Cross/Blue Shield program that was started by Lyndon Baines Johnson and is frozen in time. According to the President's board of trustees, it is going broke by 2002 and it does not matter if we had a balanced budget and we had no tax cuts, the plan is still going broke by 2002.

Now, health care in the private sector has improved in the last 30 years, but Medicare is frozen in time. We have a plan not only to preserve and protect Medicare, but we are also going to allow additional options to seniors. We also have an increase in spending from \$4,800 per year to \$6,700 per year.

Mr. Speaker, I think we not only need to have Medicare reform, but I think we need to have remedial math, too, because going from \$4,700, excuse me \$4,800 to \$6,700 per year per beneficiary is an increase in spending and not a cut. I urge my fellow Congressmen to vote for Medicare reform.

SENIORS ABOUT TO TAKE A DOUBLE HIT

(Mr. WATT of North Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WATT of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the seniors in our country are about to experience what we call in North Carolina a double hit. Not only are the Republicans cutting Medicare by \$270 billion, they are cutting Medicaid right behind it \$182 billion. Medicare is for the elderly, Medicaid is for the poor, but 69 percent of the money in Medicaid goes to the elderly also, even though they represent only 28 percent of the people who are served. Sixty-nine percent. A double hit they will be taking.

Medicare cuts on the one hand, Medicaid cuts on the other hand. It is un-American to be mean to our poor and our elderly and we should stop it right now before we get too far down the line.

KEEP HANDS OFF STOCK CAR RACING

(Mr. FUNDERBURK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FUNDERBURK. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday I was in Martinsville, VA, enjoying the Goody's 500 stock car race with 60,000 hard-working, law-abiding fans, drivers, and promoters. They sent a loud and clear message to the White House and the FDA: "Bill Clinton, keep your hands off racing."

As you know, Mr. Speaker, millions of race car fans are up in arms about Bill Clinton's plan to destroy auto racing by unconstitutionally banning legal, tobacco-based advertising at sporting events. Mr. Speaker, enough is enough. One driver summed it up be-

fore the race, " * * * until they did this I really didn't know what the difference was between a conservative and liberal. Now I know. If we let big government get away with this, next they will ban Hardees' and McDonald's hamburgers and Coca-Cola, then they will be bashing down my door to take my guns."

Mr. Speaker, America's race car fans really do know what separates liberals from conservatives. If Bill Clinton had been in Martinsville with real America instead of partying through the night with his left wing buddies in Hollywood maybe he would realize that difference also.

WOMEN STILL HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO

(Ms. HARMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, time is running out to move the statue of women suffragettes from the Capitol crypt to the Capitol rotunda. Despite the unanimous support of the Senate and wide bipartisan support from the House, no action has been taken. Is that where women's rights have been relegated this Congress, to the basement?

This Congress has already waged numerous assaults on women. During the appropriations process, choice opponents succeeded in restricting a woman's constitutional right to choose, and they threaten to take us back to the days of dangerous back alley abortions.

Congress has broken its promise to take violence against women seriously. Last Congress we passed the Violence Against Women Act, yet this year its funding was substantially reduced.

Education is one of the best ways to increase opportunities for women. Congress, however, recently eliminated the Women's Educational Equity Act and reduced job training programs for women. The refusal to move the statue of Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Susan B. Anthony is symbolic of this Congress' assault against women. If women cannot gain a reasonable place in the Capitol rotunda, what can we expect legislatively?

Women gained the right to vote 75 years ago, but we still have a long way to go, even to get out of the basement.

HIGHER TAXES, MORE GOVERNMENT, AND MORE REGULATION

(Mr. WHITFIELD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, over the past 40 years the National Democratic Party has shown without question they sincerely believe that higher taxes, more government, and more regulation can best solve the problems of the American people.

In 1993, the Clinton administration, with help from the Democrats on that

side of the aisle, passed one of the largest tax increases in the history of this country. Earlier this year we passed a small tax reduction, which has been characterized as a tax for the wealthy. I would like to go over a few of those provisions for you.

If you are an American family and you have children today we are going to give you \$500 per child tax credit. We are going to restore \$145 to remove the tax penalty for married couples in this country. We are going to restore IRA's to help savings in this country. We are going to allow small businessmen and women around this country to deduct up to \$35,000 of their investments each year to provide more jobs and a stronger economy. We are going to provide a refundable tax credit of up to \$5,000 for people who adopt children.

Is this a tax break for wealthy Americans? No, it is for the working men and women of this country.

SPIRIT AND LETTER OF LAW SHOULD BE OBSERVED

(Mr. JOHNSTON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JOHNSTON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, in an article in the *Hartford Current* dated September 27 of this year, the chair of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct reflected on the committee's inquiry into the complaint against Speaker NEWT GINGRICH. I quote, "The letter of the law is not compelling to me," she said, "I will work with our rules. Our rules have a certain degree of flexibility. My goal is to have a process that the committee members feel good about."

Mr. Speaker, the work of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct is not about Members feeling good about themselves. If both the spirit and the letter of the law are not compelling and relevant to each and every inquiry undertaken by this important committee, then we have lost sight of the purposes of its function.

□ 1030

Mr. EHLERS. Point of order.

Mr. JOHNSTON of Florida. The inquiry into the Speaker's actions and the issue of whether to hire outside counsel are critically important to this institution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HEFLEY). Will the gentleman suspend.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan [Mr. EHLERS] will state his point of order.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is addressing a matter currently under consideration by the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, and under House rules that is not permitted.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I wish to be heard on the point of order.

Mr. Speaker, on March 8 of this year, Speaker GINGRICH himself announced a new policy concerning speech on the House floor. Let me quote directly, for your consideration in making this ruling, his comments on March 8.

He said, and I quote, "The fact is, Members of the House are allowed to say virtually anything on the House floor. It is protected and has been for 200 years. It is written into the Constitution."

Mr. Speaker, it would seem to me, in view of the Speaker's own words, that comments about the Speaker and about ethics on the floor of this House are certainly within the rules of the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does the gentleman from Michigan wish to be heard?

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, that point that was just made has been made a number of times. The point is simply the rules of the House prevent us from speaking about matters which are under consideration in the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, and the speaker was out of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does the gentleman from West Virginia [Mr. WISE] wish to be heard?

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, yes, I wish to comment. As I understood the remarks of the gentleman from Florida [Mr. JOHNSTON], they were directed at the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct and the process it is undertaking. Those remarks also went to a general process and, as I think he specifically referred to, proceedings affecting any Member.

Mr. Speaker, certainly I would hope that the general conduct of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct would be a proper subject for discussion here on the House floor.

Mr. JOHNSTON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, if I may further address the inquiry, I agree with the last speaker. I was inquiring and investigating the process of the committee itself, and not into the specific inquiry of the Speaker. I think if the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. EHLERS] listened closely, the gentleman would see the distinction of his complaints last week and the freedom of speech.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, if I might be heard further on the point of order. In consideration of the rules, particularly as it relates to the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, I believe that the rules do refer to certain proceedings in front of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct being secret.

But, Mr. Speaker, when the chairwoman of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct comments publicly and repeatedly in the newspapers on this subject, surely there is an exception within our rules to permit our Members to comment on the proceedings in front of that committee when she is, herself, speaking about the Committee on Standards and Official Conduct and how it is disregarding its own rules.

Mr. EHLERS. Regular order, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair is prepared to rule on the point of order raised by the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. EHLERS]. The Member is reminded not to refer to matters currently pending before the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, and Members should refrain from references in debate to the official conduct of other Members where such conduct is not under consideration in the House by way of a report of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct or a question of the privilege of the House.

Mr. JOHNSTON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, their fair adjudication depends on a serious and faithful reading of the rules and the laws that govern our conduct. Anything less is totally unacceptable.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state it.

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, my parliamentary inquiry is this. Your ruling to the speaker in the well, was your ruling that we cannot speak or address on this floor matters pending before the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, or are we allowed to speak about the ethics process, which is published in the ethics rules that we all receive and is a public document?

Mr. Speaker, are you ruling that we cannot even speak about the process, if we disagree that the process is not being properly followed out? We are now gagged and cannot talk even about the process?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair's ruling speaks for itself. Let me repeat that ruling. Members are reminded not to refer to matters currently pending before the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct.

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, further parliamentary inquiry. So we can speak about the process? Is that your ruling? It is OK to speak about the process of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members can speak about the process, but should refrain from speaking about matters that are pending before the committee.

ADVOCATING THE WITHHOLDING OF A MEMBER'S SALARY FOR DAYS MISSED

(Mr. METCALF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, today a Member of Congress will appear in court for sentencing due to his August conviction on charges of criminal sexual assault, child pornography, aggravated criminal sexual abuse, and obstruction of justice.

Mr. Speaker, he has not cast a single vote since June. Through the end of